

TEXT II Kings 5:1-14

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to retell the story of Naaman, bringing out the point that God's ways must be obeyed even if they are not understood.

MEMORY VERSE Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.
— John 15:14

Naaman

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

YE ARE — Point to some people.

MY FRIENDS — Right hand shakes with left hand.

IF YE DO WHATSOEVER — Cup hands, palms down, move side to side.

I COMMAND YOU — Touch right index finger to lips, forcefully move finger away from body.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Jesus with a group of small children will be the portrayal for our memory verse this week. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut the picture apart on the heavy black lines, and assemble it with your students piece by piece as the verse is learned.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: For your class opener bring two jars of water, one clear and one dirty, as described under Pre-school Suggestions. Tell the students that your Bible lesson for today is about a man who was told to go wash in muddy water. Why was he to do this? Wouldn't it have made more sense to wash in clean water? Naaman found it was to his great benefit to obey God, even though he didn't understand the meaning of the instructions.

1. Naaman was a captain of the Syrian army, but he had leprosy.
2. A little captive servant girl told Naaman's wife that the prophet of God in Samaria could heal Naaman of his leprosy.
3. Naaman went first to the king of Israel, who was distressed because he knew he had no ability to heal Naaman.
4. Elisha heard of the situation and sent word that Naaman should come to him. When Naaman came, Elisha sent his servant to tell him to wash in the Jordan River seven times in order to receive his healing.
5. Naaman was angry and not inclined to wash in muddy Jordan, but his servants persuaded him to do as he had been instructed.

Climax: When Naaman finally obeyed the words of Elisha and washed seven times, the disease disappeared from his body.

Conclusion: Naaman received the desire of his heart because he obeyed the instructions of the man of God, even though he did not understand them.

Response: The students will be able to describe Naaman's actions which brought about his eventual healing, and will be able to tell why it is important for us to obey the instructions of God even if they are not understood.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

King Ahab had concluded a treaty with Ben-hadad, king of Syria, several years before this incident (I Kings 20:34); however, several minor border skirmishes continued. Naaman was the commander of the Syrian army which had made these incursions into Israelite territory. The attitude of the young Israelite slave girl stands in stark contrast to that of the wicked king of Israel who seemingly knew nothing of the power of God. (Compare II Kings 5:3 with II Kings 5:7.) Although Naaman was an enemy of Israel, in his desperate situation he believed the slave girl and sought help from the prophet of Israel.

Although Naaman had expected to be healed by some magical formula of a prophet rather than by the power of God through simple obedience to His commands, nevertheless, Naaman eventually did show humility by listening to his servants and obeying Elisha's instructions. Jesus used this incident as an example to show the religious leaders of His day that God was not looking for people who were ethnically or religiously pure, but for people who would exercise simple faith and obedience. Luke 4:27

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Start out the class time by telling the story of Naaman's having leprosy and how the maiden told him of someone who could heal him. The prophet said Naaman would be healed if he obeyed the command of God by dipping into the river Jordan seven times. Have some muddy water in a plastic tub in the classroom. Use this to show the children how the captain felt about doing something as silly as dipping seven times into this dirty

water. Even though he felt silly, he wanted to be healed. So he went ahead and dipped and was healed because he obeyed God's words.

Do a simple game of "Simon Says" in class using quiet things such as: Put your hand on your head; close your eyes. If the children disobey and do an action that Simon did not say to do, they are out of the game. Reward the followers after a short time of playing, explaining that although they did not know why they were to do the things, they still needed to follow directions to stay in the game.

As the teacher tells and acts out the story, use tongue-depressor puppets. Use each dip to reinforce that Naaman didn't know why God had said to dip seven times but he did it anyway.

Birds fly south in the winter because God has instructed them to fly south. Ask the children if they know why God has the birds do this. Most will understand that they do it to live through the cold winter months. Explain that the birds do not know this, but they go south just the same. Children need to take a lesson from the animals, and obey even when they do not understand why. Bears in hibernation could also be used, as examples, as could any other animal that hibernates for the winter.

QUESTIONS

To whom did the king of Syria send Naaman? Why?

How did the king of Israel react to the letter Naaman brought?

What did Elisha suggest to the king?

What was Elisha's message to Naaman?

How did Naaman react to Elisha's suggestion? How do you think you would react?

Was it the water of Jordan that healed Naaman's leprosy? Explain.

How important is it to obey God? Obey our ministers? Parents? Explain.

From whom did Naaman learn about the prophet in Samaria?

Why do you think Naaman believed what the little maid said?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give each child a Naaman paper doll (see Patterns) which you have completed before class. To make: cut

out the before and after poses of Naaman and glue them back-to-back. Also, make a pocket of water from blue construction paper for each child. As you tell the story in class let the children dip their sad Naaman into the water. When they have dipped seven times they can turn Naaman over to see that God had made him well because he obeyed.

Arrange a large piece of blue material (a blue sheet would be perfect) over the backs of two or three of your small Sunday school chairs that are set in a row. Explain to your class that this is the Jordan River where Naaman was told to go and wash. Let each child take a turn pretending to be Naaman. Sprinkle a little talcum powder on their arms and tell them that Naaman's leprosy looked something like that on his skin. Let them dip down behind the blue-draped chairs seven times while the rest of the class counts. On the seventh time, wipe the powder off their arms before they stand back up.

Bring two jars of water, one clear and one dirty. Ask your students which one they would want to take a bath in. Explain that this was why Naaman didn't want to do as God's helper had told him to do.

Give each child a copy of the picture divided in half, showing two rivers (see Patterns). Let them color one side blue, the other side brown.

REVIEW IDEAS

Use a real person to be the captain. In time for it to dry before the class, cover his hands, arms, and face with Kleenex tissues and spray with water. It will dry rumpled and rough looking, not very pretty at all. Place him behind a brown blanket which portrays the muddy river. As the person dips into the river (behind the blanket), he comes up the same, six times. At the last dip he removes all the tissue. You could have him walk around the classroom before and after the review to show his condition.

Impress on the children the importance of doing things according to the rules. Use a large flannel board and show them the face (7 pieces), the house (6 pieces), the minutes "egg" (5 pieces), and the square (4 pieces), (see Patterns). These pieces should be cut from felt. Start your review with the large circle of the face and add one piece at a time as you count up to seven. Next build the house with its six parts. Then "cook" the egg for five minutes. Last of all make the square with four lines. Remove one piece from each of the projects to show the children what the results would have been if you had not gone by the rules and finished each thing. The face would possibly not have a nose, or the house a door, the egg would not have been cooked enough, and the square might have ended up a triangle. Com-

pare this to Naaman's dip in the Jordan River. If he had stopped after the sixth time, the results would not have been the same. If you want God's best for you, follow His rules.

Have a volunteer come up and do a repeated task (preferably to be repeated seven times) in order to receive a specified reward. Have someone else encourage him to do it, reinforcing the thought of what the reward will

be. Compare this to Naaman's being told to wash in the Jordan seven times in order to receive his healing.

SUPPORT MATERIAL

Stories About Elijah and Elisha — Pict-o-graph, Standard Publishing

The Man Who Took Seven Baths — Arch Book, Concordia

MEMORY VERSE SONG



MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

